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Thysia

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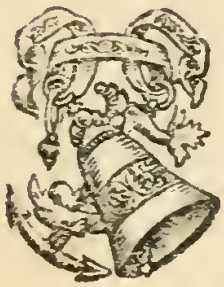
Nothing to mark it but a little mound.

THYSIA

AN ELEGY



LONDON
GEORGE BELL AND SONS
1908

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I.

TO MY SONG.

BOW down, my song, before her presence high,
In that far world where you must seek her now;
Say that you bring to her no sonnetry,
But plain-set anguish of the breast or brow;
Say that on earth I sang to her alone,
But now, while in her heaven she sits divine,
Turning, I tell the world my bitter moan,
Bidding it share its hopes and griefs with mine,
Versing not what I would, but what I must,
Wail of the wind, or sobbing of the wave;
Ah! say you raised my bowed head from the dust,
And held me backward from a wilful grave;
Say this, and her sweet pity will approve,
And bind yet closer her dear bond of love.

II.

TO THE WORLD.

Even as a bird when he has lost his mate
  Fills all the grove with his melodious wrong,
So I who mourn a grief more passionate,
  To you, O world, address my harsher song;
Yet scorn it not; sing with me, if ye will;
  My sorrow is your sorrow—yours my hope;
This winter frost but hides the daffodil,
  A joy shall hover round our song's full scope.
Further, I witness the unchanted good
  Of love and woman; join with me again;
Or if ye wait, a listening brotherhood,
  Your hearts will beat in measure with my strain:
All else is ours, the theme, the anodyne;
Only the plainsong utterance is mine.

Part I.—Death and Love.

III.

AVE.

A WITHERED life, and weary of the sun ;
Dead weight of palsied limbs, or limbs that tire ;
Parched lips that open but to close upon
Their broken, their monotonous desire—
O world, she lies beside me now, her eyes
Bright with the light of love, are not forlorn,
Her one poor hand holds a resplendent prize,
The one white violet I digged at morn.
And now I take her in my arms, or guide
Her shuffled step across the bedroom floor,
And soon at night I whisper by her side,
And hear "I love you," murmured slowly o'er ; —
God, wilt Thou not forgive me the wan past,
For surely here are death and love at last.

April 15th, 1907.

IV.

SALVE.

Near where the violets grew, as days went by,
I found a budding hope, and bore it home ;
The fairest blossom under all the sky
Was this, and sweet indeed with joys to come ;
For now the bitterness of that death is past,
Each current of her being warmlier flows,
And calmer hours bring to my love at last
A strength renewed, and to her cheek the rose.
Thus feeds my heart its fond imagining—
"Kind death shall give my treasure back to me,"
And thus, belovèd, when to you I sing,
Changed is the burden of my minstrelsy ;
Together we shall range the eternities,
Or you perchance will close my weary eyes.

V.

VALE.

I WATCH beside you in your silent room ;
Without, the chill rain falls, life dies away,
The dead leaves drip, and the fast-gathering gloom
Closes around this brief November day,
First day of holy death, of sacred rest ;
I kiss your brow, calm beautiful and cold,
I lay my yearning arms across your breast,
I claim our darling rapture as of old ;
Dear heart, I linger but a little space,
Sweet wife, I come to your new world ere long,
This lily—keep it till our next embrace,
While the mute Angel makes our love more strong,
While here I cling, in life's short agony,
To God, and to your deathless memory.

November 27th, 1907.

VI.

TO DEATH.

Relentless Death, could you not spare me this,
To snatch away my love's returning life?
Your winter follows the young spring's new bliss,
You struck your nursling with your treacherous knife;
Could you not strike at me—your happiest stroke;
For I am like this season of the year,
Its flowerless hedgerow, or its leafless oak,
Its rank brown grass through which no daisies peer;
Hark! how it mourns around the empty folds,
The cornfields bare, the orchards withering.
Or sighs amid the ruined marigolds,
Or stands disconsolate where no birds sing;
Come quickly, then, and cease my idle breath;
I only live, where all is yours, O Death.

VII.

THE FUNERAL.

The sun sinks with a visage of despair,
  And freezing vapours like a nightmare fall ;
Death on the earth beneath, Death in the air,
  Where the bell tolls, and heaven is one vast pall.
As far as I have eyes to see the way
  We journey through a desert void and drear,
And when we reach the grave, I doubt, and say
  " What is it that my heart should notice here,—
The sad deserted nest on that bare tree,
  The dead, the trampled flower on this hard ground,
My barren house left desolate to me,
  And my sweet love mingled with that cold mound—
But over it the affrighted stars will shiver,
And the world weep, and the wind moan for ever."

November 30th, 1907.

VIII.

ALONE.

The bier, the bell, the grave, silence, and night;
And you are laid in that cold ground, and gone?
I hardly missed my love till now;—O light
Of my worn, weary life, dark, dark, alone,
Blindly I feel your empty pillowed place;
O sacred head, luxuriant hair, and arm
Thro' the dim hours linked in some dear embrace,
Lips pressed to mine, and bosom beating warm,
Breath, than the evening breath of heaven more sweet,
Words faltering, passion-mixed, or sighed with prayer,
Shy, soft caresses of the hand, to greet
Or tell some passing need, or gentle care—
O love, all these have been; ah, woe is me,
For you are gone, and these no more shall be.

IX.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

No more to me the holy season brings
A grateful earnest of deep joy or rest ;
No Christmas bells I hear ; one slow bell rings
Its monotone of death within my breast ;
At night I wandered from the city drear
To find my solace by this friendly shore—
Ah me, last Christmas-eve my love came here,
And now I weep, for she will come no more.
She took short refuge from her grievous pain,
She leaned on me with hope—" Dear heart, 'tis well,
Another Christmas we shall come again "—
She comes no more ; I hear that passing bell,
My weary feet turn from the sullen sea,
No more, no more, she comes no more to me.

December 25th, 1907.

X.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

Alone I wander back at early morn,
  Back to the city drear, from death to death,
Back to the little home I left forlorn,
  Where no life is, nor one that lingereth.
I watch within your silent room once more ;
  Without, the dead leaf shivers in the blast :
Your broken comb, your glove are on the floor,
  The cold clouds see them, and they shudder past,
Startled they look upon the empty bed,
  The vacant chair, the couch left desolate,
The dying flowers that saw you lying dead,
  And me, who bow beneath my sorrow's weight,
Who only hear that bell's sad monotone—
" Alone, alone, for evermore alone."

XI.

OUR WEDDING DAY.

"Alone for evermore;"—our wedding day;
  See, dear, I give you my old gift of song—
"For nine and twenty years Love led the way,
  And Love will lead us"—dear, the way is long,
'Tis ours no more; I cannot walk alone;
  How should I sing? Nay, I can only weep,
My voice but tears, my music but a moan,
  And my last wish in your lone grave to sleep.
This flash of winter sun no comfort brings,
  I dare not look, my eyes are dim with pain,
And on your window-ledge a robin sings—
  I may not hear, for in my breast again
The bell clangs out its burden as before—
"Alone, alone, alone for evermore."

XII.

HER PICTURE—UNEXPECTEDLY DISCOVERED.

Fair face, unlooked for in this sudden grief,
  You dawn in winter like a short spring day ;
I kiss your silent lips, sad, sad relief,—
  Ah ! God, for those sweet words they used to say,
Poor broken syllables that love held dear,
  When only love was life, when life was all,—
So dwell I on the semblance that was here,
  Nor lift mine eyes beyond the funeral pall ;
Sighing, I breathe your name ; an echo calls
  Your name in sighs ; O love, come back to me,
Come where the gloom of these deserted walls
  Enfolds your lover in his agony ;—
Nay, rather, from your heaven, Spirit blest,
Descend, and take me to eternal rest.

XIII.

THE END.

Dearest, I stand beside your new-made grave,
And I must think a moment how you died ;
I see your shattered form, so calm, so brave.
I muse on all the pain that eventide,
The aid too late, the gushing of warm blood,
Your look of careless wonder like a child,
Your one poor hand filled with the crimson flood,
My scalding tears, your tearless eyes that smiled,
My breaking heart, your true heart beating low,
My stifled sob, your faint, reluctant breath—
O world, the unutterable end ye know,
The mystery, the sacredness of death :—
Darling, I love you, while upon this sod
I kneel, and dedicate my grief to God.

XIV.

THE NEW YEAR.

Comes the New Year ; wailing, the north winds blow ;
  In her cold, lonely grave my dead love lies ;
Dead lies the stiffened earth beneath the snow,
  And blinding sleet blots out the desolate skies ;
I stand between the living and the dead ;
  Hateful to me is life, hateful is death ;
Her life was sad, and on that narrow bed
  She will not turn, nor wake with human breath.
I kneel between the evil and the good ;
  The struggle o'er, this one sweet faith have I—
Though life and death be dimly understood,
  She loved me ; I loved her ; love cannot die ;
Go then thy way with thine accustomed cheer,
Nor heed my churlish greeting, O New Year.

December 31st, 1907.

XV.

TO MY FRIENDS

Who have sent such Kind Messages.

Dear Friends, I dedicate these lines to you,
  Lest you should deem me selfish in my song ;
This common tragedy of death ye knew ;
  The tragedy of her life, the pain, the wrong,
These ye could never know ; nor might I tell
  How we were bound together, sacredly
As mother to her helpless babe ; the knell
  That rung her doom sundered love's holiest tie.
Thus comes it that I make my daily moan :—
  " O wounded life, canst thou endure to live ?
This side the tomb thou wanderest alone ;
  What death has taken, only death can give " ;—
Yet would I shrink such murmurs to approve,
For surely death is God's, and God is love.

XVI.

SORROW REALIZED.

Weeks pass ; I stand beside your grave again :
  Yet is my agony not less, but more,
And like a river widening to the main,
  Deeper it flows, if calmer than before.
The busy cares that often hid my tears,
  The blow that stunned—that stayed me from despair,
Are gone ; and now I pay grief's sad arrears ;
  I loathe the light, the life, the softer air ;—
On that bare tree with the deserted nest
  Made visible, a throstle pipes his lay,
And near your sod, where other pilgrims rest,
  Two snowdrops lift their white heads from the clay ;
They come like ghosts of buried memories,
And the bird sings of some lost paradise.

XVII.

THE LOST PARADISE—DESOLATION.

At dawn the loving call, the tender kiss,
  The arm that drew me to its dear embrace,
The hand's caress, the smile that was my bliss,
  The whispered prayer of love laid face to face ;
At noon the lengthening walk, your daily pride,
  The busy tending of your ferns and flowers—
(Our little household they ;) your happy ride,
  And tearful wonder at the bounteous hours :
At eve, your hand in mine, to hear me sing,
  Or blend your faltering notes, so heavenly-fair,
And last, when sleep its sacred balm should bring,
  Again the clasp, the kiss, the whispered prayer—
O world, still let me tell my daily moan ;
I live that past again, hopeless, alone.

XVIII.

DESPAIR.

O loved for ever, take my best adieu,
O lost for ever, take my last farewell,
O listen, Spirit, while I call to you,
And turn yet once again your love to tell;
Ah, say, beloved, can you hear me cry?
Ah, yet, your counsel to myself I give;
What would my love? that I should doubt and die?
Ah, no; he greatly dares who dares to live.
'Tis midnight: I will ask her for a sign:
Through God, beloved, one dear word I claim;
I hear, trembling I hear that voice benign:
Soft through the darkness she has called my name,
Across the silence comes an answer sweet—
"I love you still: soon, surely, we shall meet."

XIX.

SEVEN WEEKS AFTER.

I would not live without you in high heaven,
  And therefore on this dreary earth I keep
All that was yours around me still: the riven
  Comb, when you fell, and were too brave to weep,
The mantle with the crimson stain—ah, me!
  The folded pile of daily clothes, so dear,
So sacred; and within the glass I see
  The faded flowers that watched beside your bier;
And there upon the floor the one poor glove,
  And there the little shoes, dearest of all,
One by the faltering foot worn through above,
  And over this my silent tears still fall,
And ere I leave the room, with weary pain
I lingering turn to look at it again.

XX.

MEMORIES.

I love to dream that you are with me still;
'Twas here you sat beneath the shade, and there
You leaned upon my arm: then, at your will,
Across our pleasant Downs I led your chair,
And by that Headland, when your ride was done,
On summer eves we drank the scented gales
Silent together, as we watched the sun
Pour gold upon the charmèd hills of Wales.
I loved to hear your prattle as you rode:
I hear it now: your voice comes back to me;
All the fair scene is yours and love's abode,
Still you are mine in each dear memory;
There's not a tree, there's not a flower we knew
But breathes and speaks to me of love and you.

XXI.

OUR GRAVE.

Where the bird warbles earliest, and new light
  Wakes the first buds of spring ; where breezes sleep
Or sigh with pity half the summer night,
  While the pale loving stars look down to weep,
There lies our grave ; a slender plot of ground—
  'Tis all the land I own ; no cross ; no tree,
Nothing to mark it, but a little mound ;
  But there my darling stays ; she waits for me,
The lily in her hand ; and when I come
  She will be glad to greet me, and will say,
" Your lily, dearest, gives you welcome home ; "
  But, ah ! dear Lord, I hunger with delay ;
Tell me, blest Lord, shall I have long to wait ?
For I must haste, or she will think me late.

Part II.—Rosemary.

XXII.

WOMAN.

WHY do the ages celebrate in song
Man, or the deeds of man, crowning with bays
The warrior, the oppressor, and the wrong,
And leave unsung woman's diviner praise?
O world, such heroes are unknown to thee,
Nor thine the eternal recompense they gain
In lowliest ways of love and piety,
In faithful service and in patient pain.
Rebuke me, Lord, if after her pure life
I hold my peace, nor rather through my tears
Tell the last age that love is more than strife,
Woman than man: Ah! dear, throughout thy years
Thy way was sweet self-sacrifice, and none
More nobly taught that love and life are one.

XXIII.

MARRIAGE.

Eyes lucent with the beam of sudden bliss,
  And lips that fill with murmurs of new love,
Two hearts that tremble to the first sweet kiss—
  Ah, me, the gain, the ecstasy thereof!
Then from the holy porch the two made one
  Pass forth upon their consecrated way,
Like mountain streamlets in the morning sun—
  Ah, me, my soul, the memory of that day!
The fruitful seasons run their joyous round,
  The time is rich in tender deed or vow,
And love with love the flying years are bound—
  Ah, me, my love, that I should mourn thee now!
Yet listen, world; 'Tis not for love I cry,
But love in absence; true love shall not die.

XXIV.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT (1).

A birthday gift, dear, (take it as of old)—
  Four sonnets, weak, and all unworthy thee ;
And listen, world, again ; ye must be told
  Some earnest truths about my love and me ;
The tears of man for man, a kindly dole,
  Flow through your elegies ; yea, let them ring
With fame and music ; can they pierce the soul
  Like this sharp passion ? 'tis of love I sing.
One flesh, one immortality they share,
  Who love like us ; they bleed when torn apart ;
What bond of man or friendship can compare
  With love's one flesh, one spirit, and one heart ?
So may this wreath of song some pity move,
The first to wither on the grave of Love.

XXV.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT (2).

Forgive me, world, if I too much have dared,
  Or struck discordant music from my lyre ;
Weary the hand that strikes, and unprepared ;
  Mine is not Milton's art, nor Shelley's fire ;
But mine at least the incomparable pain,
  Half of my being wrenched away, and gone,
Mine the deep anguish, theirs the loftier strain,
  And mine the love that sings for love alone.
For, ah ! my love, no monument she needs,
  Her virtue, not my verse, her rich renown ;
Meekly she bore her life of perfect deeds,
  And nobly at love's call she laid it down ;
Mine, then, the theme all other themes above,
To sing the life and death of love, true love.

XXVI.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT (3).

Thus, then, O world, to Love I consecrate
An elegy ; come to this grave of mine ;
Cease your own sorrow while I mourn her fate
Who shared my darkness with her light divine ;
Ah, me ! I loved her, and she loved me well ;
Pure was she as the utterance of prayer,
True as the dear home where she loved to dwell,
Fair as the lilies on her grave are fair.
Bountiful was she in the beauteous charm
Of woman ; hers no friendship's offering ;
All earth, all heaven, I folded in my arm ;
These I have lost ; and therefore must I sing,
Like soft, recurrent moanings of the dove,
These dirges of dear love, true love, our love.

XXVII.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT (4).

But more. O world ; listen yet once again
The wonder of her love ; could I forget
Her perfect tendance through my nights of pain,
Her Presence, wherein joy and healing met ;
I said, "There's nothing upon earth more sweet
Than on my feverous brow thy holy kiss :
Dear is the coming of thy noiseless feet,
Touch of thy hand, the smile that angels miss."
Could I forget, when sadness bowed my head
She raised me with her whisperings of cheer,
Sang me her songs of love, till doubt and dread
Were lightened, or made love itself more dear ;
Thus, though joy proves it, sorrow most doth prove
There's nothing we can call our own but Love.

XXVIII.

LOVE.

So sang I in the springtime of my years—
"There's nothing we can call our own but love;"
So let me murmur now that winter nears,
And even in death the deathless truth approve.
Oft have I seen the slow, the broadening river
Roll its glad waters to the parent sea;
Death is the call of love to love; the giver
Claims his own gift for some new mystery.
In boundless love divine the heavens are spread,
In wedded love is earth's divinest store,
And he that liveth to himself is dead,
And he that lives for love lives evermore;
Only in love can life's true path be trod;
Love is self-giving: therefore love is God.

XXIX.

IMMORTALITY.

Hear, O Self-Giver, infinite as good ;
  This faith, at least, my wavering heart should hold,
Nor find in dark regret its daily food,
  But catch the gleam of glories yet untold.
Yea, even on earth, beloved, as love well knew,
  Brief absence brought our fond returning kiss,
So let my soul to God's great world and you
  Look onward with sweet pain of secret bliss ;—
O sunset sky and lonely gleaming star,
  Your beauty thrills me from the bound of space,
O Love, thy loveliness shows best afar,
  And only Heaven shall give thee all thy grace ;
Grant then, dear Lord, that all who love may be
Heirs of Thy glorious Immortality.

XXX.

TRUTH.

The passing world of circumstance which wrought
  The frame, the senses, may it dimly prove
That the ethereal soul, the lofty thought,
  Wait on an endless world, a world of love?
But who will pant for knowledge—vain desire;
  Assurance breeds the slave; if man foresaw,
Passion must droop, and liberty expire;
  For man, to strive is truth, to hope is law;
Only by ceaseless effort may we mould
  Our being, and the systems in their youth,
And prosper through the universe outrolled,
  The eternal cosmic order, the One Truth;
Hope humbly, then, sad heart, through all thy pain;
Yea, choose thy sorrow as thy chiefest gain.

XXXI.

SORROW.

"Till body up to spirit work"—great voice
Of glorious Milton, men shall hear thee now,
Hear the main truth of sorrow, and rejoice;
Who wins, must fight; who seeks the mountain's brow
Must toil; who loves, who leaves behind the beast,
Must know the heart-ache; who would conquer time
And ill, must pine the vanishing flesh and feast
The spirit, till from earth he soar sublime.
God's ages do their work; do thou the rest;
Nay, beg for sorrow as thy daily bread:
Wilder the storm, so is the calm more blest;
By pain alone is wisdom perfected:
Therefore, O Lord, I will not shrink nor stay;
I only ask for light to see the way.

XXXII.

FAITH.

"The bird that chanted when my work was done
In Paradise, now sings as sweet a lay,
The flower as gladly opens to the sun,
Or bends its trustful head at close of day;
Thy path is plain, the path thy fathers trod,
Who walked by faith, not clamouring for sight;
Ask thy own heart, for there resides thy God;
Tho' darkness compass thee, in Him is light."
So speaks the God within me, and I know
His word is truth, and cometh from afar;
I may not wander from the nearer woe,
Nor seek a refuge from the infinite star;
Press on, O doubting heart, and do His will,
If only for her sake, who loves thee still.

XXXIII.

HOPE.

Yea, for the Master's sake, for all men's good;
  True love for one is true love unto all,
And faith brings hope, true love's divinest food.
  And now, what is my hope? O world, I call
To you once more; though sorrow beats me down,
  And my heart's grief is new, let me look on
To endless good, of endless life the crown,
  To endless love with her where she is gone.
But shall I shrink from her immortal gaze,
  Or tremble at a touch too bounteous?
My faith is large in those eternal days,
  And through my pain in prayer I wrestle thus—
"O Spirit, by that God we both adore,
I love thee, I shall love thee evermore."

XXXIV.

TO MY LOVE IN HEAVEN.

HOW shall I tell the measure of my love?
'Tis vain that I have given thee vows and tears,
Or striven in verse my tenderness to prove,
Or held thy hand in journeyings through the years;
Vain that I follow now with hastening feet,
And sing thy death, still murmuring in my song,
"Only for thee I would the strain were sweet,
Only for thee I would the words were strong;"
Vain even that I closed with death, and fought
To hold thee longer in a world so dear,
Vain that I count a weary world as nought,
That I would die to bring thee back; I hear
God answer me from heaven, O angel wife—
"To prove thy love, live thou a nobler life."

XXXV.

TO THE LORD GOD.

A broken heart, and a divided mind,
With these along Thy destined road I fare,
And now I look before, now look behind,
Half led by hope, half battling with despair.
If this be weakness, Lord, I pardon crave,
Thou knowest for strength, and not for rest, I pray;
Ah! Lord, I would not rest before the grave;
Let me fight on; teach me to choose Thy way:
O godlike gift of Choice, inscrutable,
Man's test in time, God's through eternity:
So help me, Lord, to make my will Thy will,
Daily to draw nearer to her and Thee,
Till freed by death, the conflict I resign,
And find eternal peace in her dear love and Thine.

THE END.

Sonnets inscribed :—III., E. G. ; V., M. T. ; VI., A. W. P. ; VII., G. C. M. ; X., M. D. ; XIX., M. C. P. ; XXIII., G. W. H. ; XX., M. L. P. ; XXVIII., T. D. ; XXI., J. M. ; XXXI., J. E. B. ; XXX., H. W. C. S. ; XVI., A. F. ; XXIX., V. F.

XXXVIII.

THE DREAM OF LIFE.

Once more, belovèd, by your grave I stand ;
  Once more the agony of silent tears
Prevails ; but not in vain the summer land
  Bathed with the sunset, smiles upon my fears ;
Along your mound a tender golden glow
  Sleeps ; shall I palter with the moment's charm,
And say, " Sweetly my darling sleeps below,
  Soft folded in her God's encircling arm " ?
Nay, for God's arm is wide ; you live, you move
  In infinite space ; your mortal dream is past ;
An ampler life is yours, a vaster love ;
  Cling closely, then ; be near me till the last,
When I may enter, leaning on your breast,
Your realm of endless light and love and rest.

XXXIX.

TRUTH.

The passing world of circumstance which wrought
  The frame, the senses, may it dimly prove
That the ethereal soul, the lofty thought,
  Wait on an endless world, a world of love?
But who will pant for knowledge—vain desire;
  Assurance breeds the slave; if man foresaw,
Passion must droop, and liberty expire;
  For man, to strive is truth, to hope is law;
Only by ceaseless effort may we mould
  Our being, and the systems in their youth,
And prosper through the universe outrolled,
  The eternal cosmic order, the One Truth;
Hope humbly, then, sad heart, through all thy pain;
Yea, choose thy sorrow as thy chiefest gain.

XL.

SORROW.

"Till body up to spirit work"—great voice
Of glorious Milton, men shall hear thee now,
Hear the main truth of sorrow, and rejoice ;
Who wins, must fight ; who seeks the mountain's brow
Must toil ; who loves, who leaves behind the beast,
Must know the heart-ache ; who would conquer time
And ill, must pine the vanishing flesh and feast
The spirit, till from earth he soar sublime.
God's ages do their work ; do thou the rest ;
Nay, beg for sorrow as thy daily bread :
Wilder the storm, so is the calm more blest ;
By pain alone is wisdom perfected ;
Therefore, O Lord, I will not shrink nor stay ;
I only ask for light to see the way.

XLI.

FAITH.

"The bird that chanted when my work was done
In Paradise, now sings as sweet a lay,
The flower as gladly opens to the sun,
Or bends its trustful head at close of day;
Thy path is plain, the path thy fathers trod,
Who walked by faith, not clamouring for sight;
Ask thy own heart, for there resides thy God;
Tho' darkness compass thee, in Him is light."
So speaks the God within me, and I know
His word is truth, and cometh from afar;
I may not wander from the nearer woe,
Nor seek a refuge from the infinite star;
Press on, O doubting heart, and do His will,
If only for her sake, who loves thee still.

XLII.

HOPE.

Yea, for the Master's sake, for all men's good ;
  True love for one is true love unto all,
And faith brings hope, true love's divinest food.
  And now, what is my hope ? O world, I call
To you once more ; though sorrow beats me down,
  And my heart's grief is new, let me look on
To endless good, of endless life the crown,
  To endless love with her where she is gone.
But shall I shrink from her immortal gaze,
  Or tremble at a touch too bounteous ?
My faith is large in those eternal days,
  And through my pain in prayer I wrestle thus—
"O Spirit, by that God we both adore,
I love thee, I shall love thee evermore."

XLIII.

NIGHT.

HAPLY my song could lull itself to sleep
Or pensive stillness in the glare of day,
But night is weary unto eyes that weep,
And thro' the gloom dark sorrow holds its way ;
It shudders at the long, remorseless years,
It tunes a lonely dirge of infinite ill—
" Ah me, my love, for life is only tears,
Ah me, a loveless world, a heart grown chill ; "
But then I gaze upon the spangled sky,
And thro' the depths I see with vision clearer
The tranquil march of heaven's majesty,
And in my need she comes like heaven, nearer,
Yea, like the night, my dream of infinite good
Is beautiful with stars in multitude.

XLIV.

TO MY LOVE IN HEAVEN.

How shall I tell the measure of my love?
'Tis vain that I have given thee vows and tears,
Or striven in verse my tenderness to prove,
Or held thy hand in journeyings through the years;
Vain that I follow now with hastening feet,
And sing thy death, still murmuring in my song,
"Only for thee I would the strain were sweet,
Only for thee I would the words were strong;"
Vain even that I closed with death, and fought
To hold thee longer in a world so dear,
Vain that I count a weary world as nought,
That I would die to bring thee back; I hear
God answer me from heaven, O angel wife—
"To prove thy love, live thou a nobler life."

XLV.

TO THE LORD GOD.

A broken heart, and a divided mind,
With these along Thy destined road I fare,
And now I look before, now look behind,
Half led by hope, half battling with despair.
If this be weakness, Lord, I pardon crave,
Thou knowest for strength, and not for rest, I pray;
Ah! Lord, I would not rest before the grave;
Let me fight on; teach me to choose Thy way;
O godlike gift of Choice, inscrutable,
Man's test in time, God's through eternity;
So help me, Lord, to make my will Thy will,
Daily to draw nearer to her and Thee,
Till freed by death, the conflict I resign,
And find eternal peace in her dear love and Thine.

THE END.

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